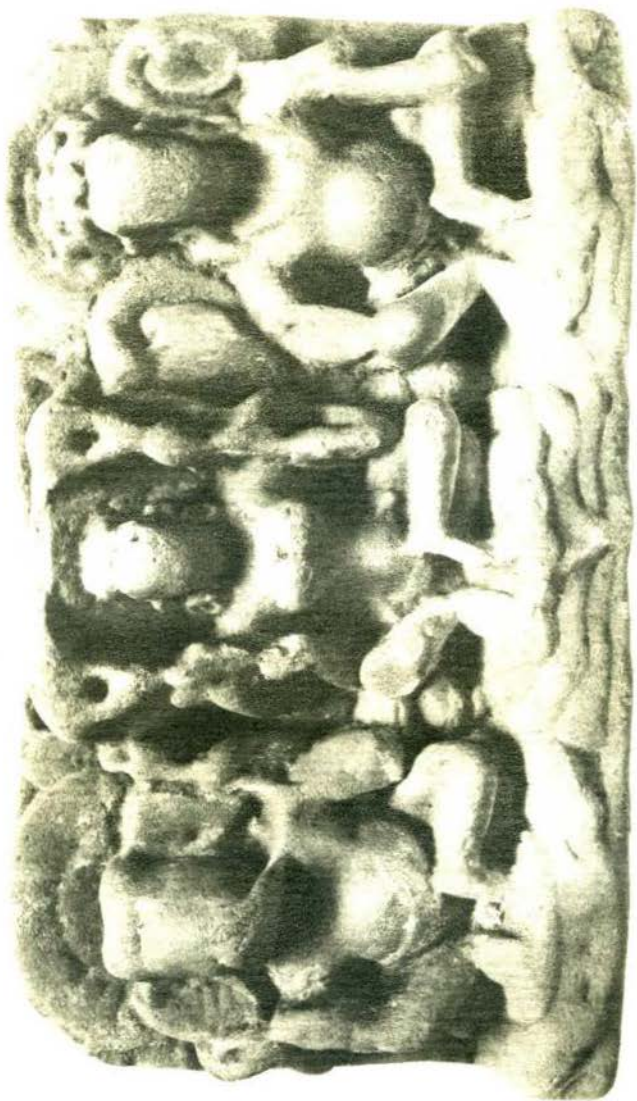


4. *A Trinity
of Fortune*

A NEW iconographic type of considerable interest is presented by two almost identical reliefs, one (Plate VII) now in the University Museum, Philadelphia (together with a second example, less complete), the other belonging to Mr. N. M. Heeramaneck and now on loan in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Plate VI). We shall first describe the trinity as it appears almost identically in both examples, and then take note of the slight variations. We have on the left Gaṇeśa, in the centre the *abhiṣeka* of Śrī-Lakṣmī, on the right Kubera; all are seated and nimbate. Gaṇeśa, who alone is four-armed, holds, lower right, uncertain, upper right, the tusk, upper left the axe (*paraśu*), lower left, a dish of sweetmeats to which his trunk is extended. The representation of Śrī-Lakṣmī presents the usual features; there seem to be money-jars on each side of her. Kubera holds in his right hand an uncertain object, in the left a long purse; in the University Museum relief there is foliage behind him. Both Gaṇeśa and Kubera are as usual somewhat pot-bellied. As to the differences, in the University Museum relief all three deities are seated on expanded lotus flowers, which spring from a common stem; in Mr. Heeramaneck's only Śrī-Lakṣmī is seated on a lotus, the two others on cushions. The University Museum relief is much abraded, but may be dated somewhere close to the eighth century; Mr. Heeramaneck's is a little better preserved, and probably a little earlier in



A TRINITY OF FORTUNE. NOW IN THE BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS



A TRINITY OF FORTUNE. NORTH INDIA, ABOUT 8TH CENTURY.
THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

date, and even with a suggestion of the plastic qualities of Gupta sculpture. Both reliefs are in creamy white sandstone; both must be of north Indian origin (Rājputāna or Bundelkhaṇḍ), the first may very possibly have been obtained from the river bed at Mathurā. The University Museum example measures thirty-five centimetres in length, Mr. Heeramaneck's twenty-one centimetres.

The three deities represented are respectively patrons of Success, Fortune, and Wealth. Kubera is one of the Four Great Kings, Regent of the North, and chief of the Yakṣas. Śrī-Lakṣmī is a goddess of abundance whose significance and iconography I have discussed elsewhere*; I may add to the already cited evidences of her connection with the Yakṣas, the fact that all four of the Great Kings are called Yakṣas in Bharhut inscriptions, hence as daughter of Dhṛtarāṣṭra she is again seen to be a Yakṣī. Gaṇeśa too is iconographically a Yakṣa type, but he is not found in art before the Gupta period and the origins of the formula are rather obscure**. Thus, it would hardly be going too far to speak of these reliefs as "Yakṣa Trinities."

A. K. Coomaraswamy.

5. *The Wheeling Expedition*

AT Beech Bottom, near Wheeling, West Virginia, an archaeological party from the Museum excavated a small Indian mound during July and August with interesting results.

**Early Indian Iconography, II, Śrī-Lakṣmī*, Eastern Art, I, 1929.

**See my *Yakṣas*, Washington 1928, p. 7, and *Gaṇeśa*, Bull. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, No. 154, 1928.